
AS-LEVEL HISTORY

Component 7041/1C
Report on the Examination

Specification 7041
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Component 7041/1C

The Tudors: England, 1485–1603

Component 1C: Consolidation of the Tudor Dynasty: England, 1485–1547

General Comments

The new component 1 represents a different style of breadth history examination based around key questions. These key questions underpin both the extract question and the essay questions. The chronological coverage of this option is slightly longer than HIS1B in the legacy specification, and the key questions also broaden the material which is to be covered.

Students responded well to the demands of the new paper, in particular the requirement to answer two longer questions, as opposed to four shorter questions on the legacy specification. Students were able to write at greater length for both the extract question and also for the essay response. Both types of question enabled students to present rounded responses.

The overall quality of responses was encouraging, with many students demonstrating good understanding of the period 1485–1547. The essay question on Henry VII (question 02) was more popular than the one on Henry VIII (question 03). There was generally a sound knowledge base for students' answers and a secure recognition of the wider significance of events and developments.

Section A

Question 1

This was a new style question based on the comparison of historians' interpretations of a given issue, in this case Henry VII's consolidation of royal authority. Students presented a range of different approaches - examiners rewarded those who focused on answering the question. In these questions it is important that students focus on assessing the two interpretations, so students who invested time in gaining a sense of where the two extracts differed tended to do well.

In Extract A, Roger Lockyer argued that Henry used a variety of moderate methods, the effectiveness of some of which were difficult to estimate. Lockyer argued that there was no simple solution to Henry's problems in maintaining his authority, but the most effective methods were the old established ones. In contrast, in Extract B, G J Meyer argued that Henry's whole reign was a prolonged exercise in stripping away the independence of the nobility and that methods were used to cripple the great families into absolute submission. Students were generally better at identifying the interpretation offered by Meyer than that suggested by Lockyer.

Having identified the interpretation, rather than focusing on the factual content, students were expected to use their own knowledge to evaluate which was the most convincing interpretation. Students were not expected to have a prescriptive body of knowledge, but were expected to draw on knowledge of the methods used which went beyond the given content of the extracts. It was perfectly acceptable additionally to assess the extracts in terms of what they did not include as long as this was linked to an evaluation of Henry's attempt to consolidate his authority, rather than random facts about Henry VII's reign.

It is equally acceptable to compare the two extracts point by point or to consider them sequentially. For example, both extracts do consider methods such as bonds and recognizances, but with different views on their significance.

Finally, students were expected to arrive at a judgement about which was the more convincing interpretation and why. The best answers offered a substantial concluding paragraph based on a critical assessment of what was written in the extracts. Spurious questioning of the date at which the historian was writing or their probity gained little credit. These historians did not 'get their facts wrong' – the question is about evaluating their arguments.

Section B

Question 02

This was the more popular of the two optional questions and produced some well-supported and considered responses. A small number of students misread the question and believed that it was about Henry VIII's foreign policy rather than that of Henry VII. Most students were well informed about Henry VII's foreign policy and were able to consider a range of motives, including trade, financial constraints and both domestic and foreign challenges. Students are rewarded for their individual evaluation of the motives, but it is expected that serious attention should be paid to the focus of the question, in this case, international prestige. A small number of students ignored this entirely, and presented an ill-focussed essay on foreign policy, perhaps based on one they had done in class. The best responses were those which looked at prestige linked to other motives, for example the betrothal of Arthur and Catherine which could also be linked to security and trade. International prestige was also significant in terms of action taken by Henry against France in support of Brittany..

Question 03

Fewer students selected this question, but most of those who did were relatively secure in their understanding of the main events of religious policy and change in the years 1529 to 1547. A small number of responses focused on Henry's attempts to gain the annulment with perhaps an additional paragraph on the dissolution of the monasteries. However, most students attempted to present a balanced response. Of more serious concern was the lack of understanding of what abandonment of the Catholic faith meant – for the majority, there was an assumption that if Henry was not Catholic then he was Protestant without any detailed explanation. A number of responses considered how far the measures taken by Henry were either pragmatic, or were the policies of his advisors, or even his wives. The really good responses considered the difference between Catholic doctrine and measures which might be promoted by reformers such as the Bible in English.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.